

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 1188  
By Cooper

A RESOLUTION to honor and congratulate the staff and owners of the Southern Standard on the celebration of the newspaper's 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should salute those noble publications which, through the extraordinary efforts of their founders, employees, and owners, are regarded as informative, honest, and culturally relevant sources of local, national, and world news; and

WHEREAS, the *Southern Standard* of McMinnville is one such estimable publication whose staff, along with the community of Warren County, is celebrating the 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of its first printing; and

WHEREAS, founded in 1879 by R.P. Baker, the *Southern Standard* newspaper, with Dr. John R. Paine as editor, initially focused on national news and partisan politics, but in the early 1880s introduced coverage of local events and opinions, thereby influencing the social, agricultural, and economic recovery of Warren County after the devastation wrought by the Civil War and by punitive Reconstruction policies; and

WHEREAS, successive owners and editors through 1924 included retired Cumberland Female College President A.M. Burney, Dr. J.B. Ritchey, W.C. Womack, R.M. Reams, and H.P. Newton; the paper's news content has prospered recently under distinguished editors and associate editors, including Franklin B. (Chick) Brown, Rayford Davis, Chuck Dodson, Mike Pirtle, Patricia Zechman, Steve Wildsmith, Mike McGee, and James Clark; and

WHEREAS, Tom C. Price, formerly of Winchester, Tennessee, had been leaseholder of the *Southern Standard* for approximately a year when a fire in December of 1925 completely destroyed its offices, printing plant, and archives of previous editions, forcing the publication to relocate to the Barry Building on Morford Street in McMinnville; and

WHEREAS, local attorneys W.G. McDonough and Lyman B. Turner leased the newspaper in 1929, and a year later Mr. Turner acquired sole ownership; in 1955, Turner sold the paper to James R.W. White, who moved it to modern facilities on College Street, where it continued to be published after its purchase, along with that of its sister publication, *The Smithville Review*, by the Morris Newspaper Corporation of Savannah, Georgia, in 1978; and

WHEREAS, building upon a tradition of public service, journalistic excellence, and constructive interest in community affairs, the Morris Newspaper Corporation and its *Southern Standard* associates reaffirm with every new edition their commitment to the highest ideals of integrity, objectivity, vigor, and responsibility in news reporting; and

WHEREAS, among its many achievements in public service, the *Standard* has organized and promoted the annual Share A Christmas Dinner project, collecting more than \$100,000 in donations from readers and businesses to supply food during the holiday season to families in need of assistance; and

WHEREAS, the paper has also championed the fundraising projects of the American Cancer Society, Families in Crisis, Warren County Humane Society, Magness Memorial Library, Project Graduation, and numerous other community service and humanitarian efforts; and

WHEREAS, in recognition of the *Southern Standard's* vigorous and energetic reporting, its informed, perspicacious, and stimulating commentary, its exceptional photographic art, its imaginative, high-impact graphics, and its effective advertising production, the Tennessee Press Association has awarded the McMinnville newspaper many of its highest honors, attesting to the extraordinary quality and character of this publication; and

WHEREAS, in its continuing effort to promote a higher level of literacy in the general population, the newspaper provides material resources and leadership in elementary school-based reading programs; and

WHEREAS, among their most successful projects is the *Mini-Standard*, a regular supplement to their main publication which showcases the original writing and school activities of Warren County's younger citizens and whose mascot, Bonnie Bear, makes frequent public appearances at school events and community socials; and

WHEREAS, as Warren County's source for printed news, public-service, and commercial information, the Standard Publishing Company's modern printing facilities also produce other periodicals, including the *Tennessee VFW News*, the *Weekly Mountain View* of Spencer, the *Smithville Review*, the *Pioneer Shopper*, the DeKalb County High School's *Eye of the Tiger*, the *Business Monthly* supplement to the *Southern Standard*, and *El Paisano*; and

WHEREAS, leading the business and editorial functions of the *Southern Standard* are the Morris Newspaper Corporation staff, led by Tennessee Properties Vice President William R. (Ron) Fryar, Publisher Patricia Zechman, General Manager Sharon Patrick, Managing Editor James Clark, and Circulation Director Bill Cathcart; and

WHEREAS, as the newspaper celebrates its past achievements and prepares to serve its readers in the future the *Southern Standard* will be celebrate its 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary at McMinnville's downtown park, on Friday, May 21, 2004; and

WHEREAS, throughout its illustrious history, the *Southern Standard* has served as a chronicle of the human experience; as such, its staff and owners are to be commended for their exceptional commitment and dedication to promoting excellence in journalism; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we hereby honor and congratulate the staff and owners of the *Southern Standard* on the celebration of the newspaper's 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and extending to them our wishes for the continued success of this fine publication.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.